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DEENSON'S THANKSGIVING.

BY CHARLOTTE ROGERS.

The afternoon sun was doing its last and most effective work of the day; for this was the only hour that anything like beauty could be said to touch the settlement.

Half a dozen cabins divided by a dusty roadway, a blacksmith shop, and a store, constituted the settlement. The road was never empty from a procession of pigs and chickens, with occasionally a cow—the property of the inhabitants. It was a kind of public barnyard.

The store and smithy ran each other close as to which should have the latest bit of gossip to retail to its customers. It was a not unfriendly rivalry, however, and one proprietor was never too proud to listen to what the other had to say. The settlement did not pretend to be a mining village. Its men were hunters in a desultory way, and had lived there some time before the gold fever broke out around them. Some had caught it, and gone away; but the majority preferred the old way of life. It involved less worry and responsibility.

The place was unusually lively this evening, for some miners had come up the valley with wonderful tales of a claim down there that was paying out gold by the handful. They stood in the center of an eager group, completely surrounded and filled the doorway of the store.

Presently a girl came up the path, with a bucket on her head and her sun-bonnet under her arm. She was small and dark and very pretty, but she looked sad.

"I wish you all would let me in," she said. "I'm separated, and as she entered the store one of the newcomers asked who she was.

"She's Deenson's daughter," said a member of the settlement, running his thumb under his suspender and giving it a hitch. "Ain't you never heard of old Deenson—him as lives over on 'Purvey Flat'?"

"He's the man," they say, "an' I guess he must be 'ere; but he wouldn't go on fivin' on a worked out claim. He says the gold's there yet; but the other men as owned it hadn't patience. Lord! he's got patience, but that's about all. Deenson's so poor and the claim so low down poor we call it 'Purvey Flat'."

An embarrassed silence fell upon the group as the girl passed, through it; but she had heard she gave no sign, and she knew the man who had been talking about the claim was a liar.

As soon as she was gone, a man detached himself from the edge of the party, and hurrying round the store, struck a trail that a few minutes would show the one that Deenson's daughter was following.

He was a tall, fine looking fellow, of average between twenty and thirty. He wore the typical miner's clothes; but added with an easy grace that suggested much more than a simple miner.

When they met she expressed no surprise at seeing him. "Ye can carry the pail if ye want ter," he replied to his offer, "but there's not much in it ter-night to make it heavy. I wonder what we're goin' to do this mornin'?"

"I'll stick to the old claim, though that's a mighty fine one. He ain't much fit to work if that war. Sometimes I think I'd like to be a little teched right here," he said, pushing back his bonnet and looking for a moment at the girl.

"I'll be a little teched right here," he said, pushing back his bonnet and looking for a moment at the girl. "I'll be a little teched right here," he said, pushing back his bonnet and looking for a moment at the girl.

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